

This is Love by Harringrovefic

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“You’re full of bullshit.”

Steve stiffened. The words felt like icy daggers piercing into his lungs. He stared, a look of hurt and sternness in his murky eyes. One of immediate regret in the icy blues that stared back at him.

This is Love

Author's Note:

Hey guys! First Harringrove fic, enjoy!

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Steve stiffened. The words felt like icy daggers piercing into his lungs. He stared, a look of hurt and sternness in his murky eyes. One of immediate regret in the icy blues that stared back at him.

“I’m sorry.” The voice was now soft, wavering a little. A light year away from the brazen tone it retained seconds beforehand. “Steve,” the owner of the voice, Billy, began.

“That’s not what I meant. You know that’s not what I meant.” He dried his hands, which were wet from the water still running in the sink from their after-dinner dish washing, and brought one up to cup Steve’s face. Steve’s expression remained stern, almost disciplining Billy like a misbehaved child

“I’m sorry,” Billy said again, pointedly, looking right into Steve’s eyes so Steve could read his emotions, read his regret. Billy never did that. Which proved to Steve just how sorry he was. But Steve was still hurt.

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Billy’s words sent him whirling into a flashback. Then, he was staring into a different pair of piercing blue eyes, eyes fading with drunkenness. Steve remembered the way his heart fell out of his ass after it stopped, how his body froze over as if he had dove head first into a pool of ice water, the stinging in his eyes, the ringing in his ears, the way his mind repeated what? Nononononono as if it kept going the words that left his love’s lips would somehow not be true, not have been said at all. Steve had spent two whole months miserable, heartbroken, confused. The only things to distract him were equally terrifying: monsters from another dimension and, eventually, his sudden friendship with and attraction to Billy

Hargrove, the guy that had been a pain in everyone's ass since his arrival in their small town in Indiana and who had damn near beaten his face flat.

Billy had made his amends with everyone he'd hurt before Steve would even look at him. He was trying to be better but the years of hurt and abuse had built an anger inside of Billy that would take more than a few apologies and restored relationships to water down. Billy would still throw some harsh words when he was angry but he always immediately regretted it and apologized thoroughly, especially when Steve threw him a stern look or, discretely, grabbed him by his waist and whispered "Behave" in his ear with authority and warning.

Tonight, their night was going like most of their Friday nights went. Billy was at Steve's house after a long day of school. They fucked, cuddled until Billy got up to cook dinner—hell bent on getting some real food into Steve who stuck to take out, usually pizza, when his parents were out of town—and washed their dishes thereafter. Normally, they would fool around again—though Billy would always complain he was sore from the first time—until Billy's 12:00 curfew approached and he had to leave. But tonight, an argument had ensued over dinner. The topic: Nancy Wheeler.

Steve and Billy began eating lunch at their own table when they became friends. Steve had still been numb from the break up with Nancy and opted out of sitting with her and Jonathan. And Billy stayed away from Tommy in his quest to be a better person. However, Steve and Nancy were slowly becoming friends again and she and Jonathan sat with Steve and Billy that day at lunch. To everyone but Billy, it went well.

After somewhat detached sex—in which Billy gave out very mixed signals, clutching Steve as close as he could with his legs wrapped around Steve's slender waist and clutching his back and hair like he was drowning in a sea and they were his life savers as Steve thrustled inside of him, while simultaneously refusing to look Steve in his eyes or kiss his lips—Billy avoided Steve's embrace and got up to fix some pasta. Steve, confused, followed him downstairs and tried to get Billy to talk, which was always a tall order. Billy insisted he was fine and was just really hungry. Steve let it go until, while eating, the tension

became unbearable.

He dropped his fork on his plate, "What's wrong Billy? Will you please just talk to me?" he asked in a gentle but annoyed tone.

"Nothing. Just don't enjoy watching you and your ex making doe eyes at each other from across the table while I'm eating my lunch," Billy said, nonchalantly. Steve stared. Billy kept eating, never having made eye contact with Steve.

"Are you fucking kidding me?" Steve asked irritated and still in disbelief.

"No," Billy said dropping his fork and looking up at Steve for the first time that evening, anger evident in his eyes. "I'm not. If you still love her, what the hell are you doing with me then? Cause I get that you might need to get your dick wet and that's fine but don't tell me you fucking care about me when you're still in love with someone else. I think we both know you don't need to do that to get me in bed," Billy finished, going back to his pasta. Again, Steve stared in disbelief, speechless.

"I'm not still in love with Nancy and fuck you for accusing me of not caring about you once again," Steve replied when he finally found his words, blankly shaking his head and going back to his food. It was Billy's turn to stare.

"I saw the way you looked at her, Steve." Billy's voice was soft, hurt evident in his words. Steve knew shit was serious when Billy didn't try to mask his pain. "I get it if you're still into her, just don't do that shit in front of me. It's fucking disrespectful." Billy looked down again before Steve could see the tears welling in his eyes, but Steve had already heard them in his voice.

"I'm not still into her Bill. It's just, we have history and I'm still hurt when she's around."

"Exactly!" Billy cut Steve off. "If you're over her then why the fuck do you still care about that shit? You're with me now, you shouldn't be emotionally involved in past relationships."

“Oh, I’m with you now?” Steve was angry now, sarcasm and heat dripping from his voice. “Well that’s really interesting to find out considering you refuse to talk about what the hell we are!”

“Oh don’t turn this on me.”

“I have to drag every fucking feeling and thought out of you,” Steve continued, ignoring Billy. “And just because I’m still hurt by Nancy doesn’t mean I’m still in love with her. And I find it really fucking stupid that I’m always the one getting accused of not fucking caring when you can’t even look me in the eye or fucking kiss me while we’re in bed. You know I hate having sex like that.”

“The cum in my ass isn’t any indication.” Ignored again.

“Or talk about your problems or your feelings. Or how about this one? TELL ME YOU FUCKING CARE!” They stared at each other, painfully.

Suddenly, Billy got up and took their plates to wash the dishes. Steve got up to dry them and that’s when Billy said the thing he was sure he would regret most in life. “You’re full of bullshit.”

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“Steve...” Steve walked away.

“Shit” Billy cursed. He finished the dishes while crying and regretting. Why did he always have to hurt everyone? When he finished the dishes he went upstairs to find that Steve was in the shower. He figured Steve wouldn’t want to talk anymore so he put on his clothes—as he was wearing only a pair of sweats he kept at Steve’s house for nights like this one—and left.

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They’d gone the whole weekend without speaking and it pained the both of them. But when they saw each other at school on Monday, they still avoided one another. “Where’s Billy?” Nancy asked when she and Jonathan sat down at their lunch table where Steve was sitting alone.

“Dunno,” Steve said softly. “We had a fight Friday night and we haven’t spoken since.” Nancy and Jonathan looked concerned but didn’t ask what the fight was about. They figured if Steve wanted them to know, he’d have told them. They ate in silence.

That afternoon, Steve and Billy had to bring the kids to the arcade. Because it was a school night, they were only allowed to stay until six and usually, Billy and Steve hung out while they played as they found it pointless to go all the way home when they’d be leaving again in a couple of hours. Plus they just wanted to hang out, usually along an empty road in the back of Steve’s car.

Steve was wary as he pulled up to park at the arcade. Billy was standing outside, leaning against his car smoking and damn Steve hasn’t seen him do that in a while. Everyone had taken note that Billy smoked a lot less since becoming close with Steve. “He found a new distraction,” Hopper had shrugged looking at Jane. Steve figured if Billy didn’t leave after dropping off Max, he must have wanted to talk, so he got out of the car. The rest of the bunch looked at them oddly but scampered into the arcade to find Max nonetheless, not wanting to waste a single minute of playing time. Billy walked up to Steve and asked, “Can we talk?”

They were driving down the road in tense silence for about twenty minutes before Steve turned into a familiar opening in the forest. He didn’t drive to Hopper’s house but was near it, knowing they would be safe around there.

“Steve,” Billy sighed. “I never meant to hurt you. I just...” Billy trailed off, his lips forming into a harsh line and his neck strained. Even having practiced this speech since Friday night, Billy still couldn’t get his words out. “I do care about you, I think I might love you and that’s why seeing you and Wheeler together hurts me so fuckin’ much. She’s beautiful and easier to be with for a number of reasons and I got jealous,” Billy had force every word out, his chest felt like it was caving in. “I know you care about me Steve even though I keep telling you and myself that you don’t. You know why I do that.” And Steve did. Billy was tearing up again and even though he made a huge step talking about his feelings, he retracted and turned away from Steve, hiding his emotions. It was a process.

Steve sighed. "I know you didn't mean that shit the way she did, Bill. But damn, did I not cry to you enough about it for you to know better? You've gotta watch what the fuck you say Billy. And I get that you're jealous of Nancy but you shouldn't be because as blindly in love as was with her, that wasn't shit compared to what we have. This," he pointed between them, "is real. And more things came with me and Nancy's breakup than heartbreak. My whole damn life fell apart with it so yeah it's gonna take me some time to get over that. But Billy, baby," Steve reached over to Billy, grabbing his face in his hands. "The only person I love is you." Billy gaped, and Steve took advantage of his open mouth and kissed him passionately. He kissed Billy deep and slow, the wet smacks of their lips were cymbals in the quietness of the car. The cold dried Billy's tears on his face and Steve rubbed at the stains.

"I love you too," Billy said breathlessly. "I'm sorry," his voice cracked.

"I know, love."

Author's Note:

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